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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 DHA-02 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-07 /098 W
----------152220Z 041558 /73
R 151545Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY RABAT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1266
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 1384

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, SHUM, MO
SUBJECT: MOROCCAN PRESS CENSORSHIP LIFTED

1. OPPOSITION NEWSPAPERS MARCH 10 REPORTED GOVERNMENT DECISION TO LIFT PRESS CENSORSHIP. ISTIQLAL'S L'OPINION COMMENTED THAT CENSORSHIP HAD BEEN APPLIED SINCE 1967 WITHOUT LEGAL BASIS AND IN VIOLATION OF DECREES ON PUBLIC FREEDOMS AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION. THE PAPER NEVERTHELESS WELCOMED THE MOVE AS HELPING TO IMPROVE ATMOSPHERE BEFORE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (NOW EXPECTED IN SECOND HALF OF MAY). GOVERNMENT INFORMATION ORGANS AND SEMI-OFFICIAL PRESS DID NOT MENTION THE DECISION.

2. WELL-PLACED JOURNALIST TELLS US THAT REPRESENTATIVES OF EACH NEWSPAPER WERE CONVOKED MARCH 8 BY MIN INFO TAIBI BENHIMA AND INFORMED THERE WOULD NO LONGER BE A REQUIREMENT TO SUBMIT DAILY EDITIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT CENSOR FOR APPROVAL PRIOR TO DISTRIBUTION. BENHIMA ALSO REMINDED THEM OF THE PRESS CODE (DECREE OF NOVEMBER 15, 1958, AMENDED APRIL 10, 1973), WHICH
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PROVIDES FOR STIFF PENALTIES FOR A WIDE RANGE OF OFFENSES. (THE DIRECTOR OF A NEWSPAPER CAN BE JAILED OR FINED FOR SUCH OFFENSES AS LESE MAJESTE, DEFAMATION OF A FRIENDLY CHIEF OF STATE, AND VIOLATIONS OF NATIONAL SECURITY.) BENHIMA, ACCORDING TO THE SOURCE, LEFT NO DOUBT THAT THE CODE WOULD BE STRICTLY ENFORCED AND SUGGESTED THAT THE PRESS IN FUTURE CENSOR ITSELF CAREFULLY.

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3. COMMENT: LIFTING OF CENSORSHIP UNDOUBTEDLY INTENDED BY GOM TO BE RESPONSIVE TO OPPOSITION DEMAND IN CONNECTION WITH UPCOMING PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS. PROJECTED DURATION OF THE DECISION IS NOT CLEAR. WE UNDERSTAND THAT DIRECTORS OF OPPOSITION PAPERS ARE SERIOUSLY CONCERNED OVER INCREASED POSSIBILITY OF PROSECUTION. WHETHER USUALLY LIVELY OPPOSITION PRESS WILL THEREFORE BECOME NOTICEABLY MORE CAUTIOUS REMAINS TO BE SEEN.
ANDERSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CENSORSHIP, THE PRESS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 15-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977RABAT01384
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770089-0312
Format: TEL
From: RABAT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770358/aaaabzat.tel
Line Count: 70
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Litigation History:
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Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3103441
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MOROCCAN PRESS CENSORSHIP LIFTED
TAGS: PINS, SHUM, SOPN, MO
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/121ef8b7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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